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Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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53
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

OMB-01 /063 W
---------- 086605
R 231017Z FEB 76
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4282

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 659

E.O. 11652:NGDS
TAGS: PINT, CE
SUJECT: NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION IN FINANCE MINISTER

REF: COLOMBO 466

1. NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION IN FINANCE AND JUSTICE MINISTER FELIX DIAS BANDARANAIKE ENDED IN CONFUSION JUST AFTER MIDNIGHT FEBRUARY 12. NO DIVISION WAS TAKEN AS SPEAKER APPARENTLY DECLARED NAYS TO HAVE IT BY VOICE VOTE. OPPOSITION, ESPECIALLY TROTSKYITES,WERE AT SAME TIME VOCIFEROUSLY DEMANDING RIGHT OF FORMER PLANTATIONS MINISTER COLVIN DE SILVA TOWIND UP DEBATE ALTHOUGH PREVIOUSLY AGREED MIDNIGHT DEADLINE HAD EXPIRED.

2. DEBATE SEEMS TOHAVE SHED LITTLE LIGHT WITH OPPISITION LEADERS REPEATING THEIR CHARGES (REFTEL) AND JUSTICE AND FINANCE MINISTER BANDARANAIKE PUTTING FORWARD COUNTER-ARGUMENTS IN HIS OWN DEFENSE. OUTCOME SEEMS TO BE THAT BOTH SIDES CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THEIR OWN STORIES AND THINK THEY CAME OUT AHEAD. BANDARANAIKE, IN HIGHLY SELF-CONGRATULATORY MANNER, ENTHUSED TO AMBASSADOR ABOUT HIS TRIUMPH OVER OPPOSTION IN DEBATE. OPPOSITION UNDOUBTEDLY FEELS IT HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL AT LEAST TO SOME DEGREE IN CALLING INTEGRITY OF GOVERNMENT,
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AND PARTICULARLY JUSTICE AND FINANCE

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MINISTER WHOM THEY DETEST, INTO QUESTION.

3. ALTHOUGH OPPOSITION IS STILL CLAIMING VALIDITY OF
VOTE IS IN DOUBT, ASEMBLY PARLIAMENTARIAN'S OFFICE
TELSS US NEGATIVE VOTE HAS BEEN RECORDED AND MATTER
WILL NOT BE TAKEN UP AGAIN. IN ADDITION, BANDARANAIKE
WILL BE LEAVING FOR UK ON FEBRUARY 29 TO HAVEYE CONDITION
TREATED. HE EXPECTS TO BE AWAY ABOUT FIVE WEEKS THUS REMOVING
CURRENT TARGET OF OPPOSITION ATTACKS FOR
TIME BEING.
VAN HOLLEN

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NNN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: OPPOSITION PARTIES, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, VOTE OF CONFIDENCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976COLOMB00659
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: DG ALTERED
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760067-0096
From: COLOMBO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760224/aaaaauwg.tel
Line Count: 72
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 COLOMBO 466
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 JUN 2004 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <21 JUN 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION IN FINANCE MINISTER
TAGS: PINT, CE, (BANDARANAIKE, FELIX DIAS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006